

TITLE IV  
AUXILIARY PERSONNEL

CHAPTER 20  
DENTAL ASSISTANTS

[Prior to 5/18/88, Dental Examiners, Board of[320]]

**650—20.1(153,78GA,ch1002) Registration required.** A person shall not practice on or after July 1, 2001, as a dental assistant unless the person has registered with the board and received a certificate of registration pursuant to this chapter.

**650—20.2(153,78GA,ch1002) Definitions.** As used in this chapter:

*“Dental assistant”* means any person who, under the supervision of a dentist, performs any extra-oral services including infection control, dental radiography, or the use of hazardous materials or performs any intraoral services on patients. The term “dental assistant” does not include persons otherwise actively licensed in Iowa to practice dental hygiene or nursing who are engaged in the practice of said profession.

*“Direct supervision”* means that the dentist is present in the treatment facility, but it is not required that the dentist be physically present in the treatment room while the dental assistant is performing acts assigned by the dentist.

*“General supervision”* means that a dentist has delegated the services to be provided by a dental assistant. The dentist need not be present in the facility while these services are being provided.

*“Personal supervision”* means the dentist is physically present in the treatment room to oversee and direct the services of the dental assistant.

**650—20.3(153,78GA,ch1002) Scope of practice.**

**20.3(1)** In all instances, a dentist assumes responsibility for determining, on the basis of diagnosis, the specific treatment patients will receive and which aspects of treatment may be delegated to qualified personnel as authorized in these rules.

**20.3(2)** A lawfully licensed dentist may delegate to a dental assistant those procedures for which the dental assistant has received training. This delegation shall be based on the best interests of the patient. The dentist shall exercise supervision and shall be fully responsible for all acts performed by a dental assistant. A dentist may not delegate to a dental assistant any of the following:

- a. Diagnosis, examination, treatment planning, or prescription, including prescription for drugs and medicaments or authorization for restorative, prosthodontic or orthodontic appliances.
- b. Surgical procedures on hard and soft tissues within the oral cavity and any other intraoral procedure that contributes to or results in an irreversible alteration to the oral anatomy.
- c. Administration of local anesthesia.
- d. Placement of sealants.
- e. Removal of any plaque, stain, or hard natural or synthetic material except by toothbrush, floss, or rubber cup coronal polish, or removal of any calculus.
- f. Dental radiography, unless the assistant is qualified pursuant to 650—Chapter 22.
- g. Those procedures that require the professional judgment and skill of a dentist.

**20.3(3)** A dental assistant may perform duties consistent with these rules under the supervision of a licensed dentist. The specific duties dental assistants may perform are based upon:

- a. The education of the dental assistant.
- b. The experience of the dental assistant.

**650—20.4(153,78GA,ch1002) Categories of dental assistants.** There are three categories of dental assistants. Both the supervising dentist and dental assistant are responsible for maintaining documentation of training. Such documentation must be maintained in the office of practice and shall be provided to the board upon request.

**20.4(1) *Dental assistant trainee.*** Dental assistant trainees are all individuals who have received no prior training or experience in dental assisting, but who will learn the necessary skills under the personal supervision of a licensed dentist. The dental assistant trainee shall meet the following requirements:

*a.* Within 60 days of employment, the dental assistant trainee shall successfully complete a course of study and examination in the areas of infection control, hazardous waste and jurisprudence. The course of study shall be prior approved by the board and sponsored by a board-approved postsecondary school.

*b.* Immediately after satisfactorily completing six months of work as a dental assistant within the previous 12-month period, the trainee or dentist must apply to the board for the trainee to be reclassified as a registered dental assistant.

**20.4(2) *Registered dental assistant.*** A registered dental assistant may perform under general supervision all extraoral duties in the dental office or dental clinic that are assigned by the dentist that are consistent with these rules. During intraoral procedures, the registered dental assistant may, under direct supervision, assist the dentist in performing duties assigned by the dentist that are consistent with these rules. The registered dental assistant may take radiographs if certified pursuant to 650—Chapter 22.

**20.4(3) *Expanded function dental assistant.*** Beginning July 1, 2002, an expanded function dental assistant may perform under general supervision all extraoral duties in the dental office or dental clinic that are assigned by the dentist that are consistent with these rules. Beginning July 1, 2002, an expanded function dental assistant may perform, under direct supervision, intraoral procedures for which the dental assistant has successfully completed formal training sponsored by a board-approved program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association or other program approved by the board. All expanded function duties must be assigned by the dentist and be consistent with these rules. Examples of expanded function dental assistant duties include, but are not limited to, the monitoring of nitrous oxide inhalation analgesia, temporization of crowns, placement and removal of temporary restorations, placement of periodontal dressings, taking impressions for dental appliances, and bite registrations.

**650—20.5(153,78GA,ch1002) Registration requirements prior to July 2, 2001.**

**20.5(1)** A person employed as a dental assistant as of July 1, 2001, shall be registered with the board as a registered dental assistant without meeting the application requirements specified in 20.6(153,78GA,ch1002), provided the application is postmarked by July 1, 2001.

**20.5(2)** Applications for registration prior to July 2, 2001, must be filed on official board forms and include the following:

*a.* The fee as specified in 650—Chapter 15.

*b.* Evidence of current employment as a dental assistant as demonstrated by a signed statement from the applicant's employer.

*c.* Evidence of current certification in dental radiography pursuant to 650—Chapter 22 if engaging in dental radiography.

**20.5(3)** Applications must be signed and verified by the applicant as to the truth of the documents and statements contained therein.

**650—20.6(153,78GA,ch1002) Registration requirements after July 1, 2001.** Effective July 2, 2001, dental assistants must meet the following requirements for registration:

**20.6(1) Dental assistant trainee.**

a. The employer of a dental assistant trainee must notify the board in writing of such employment within seven days of the time the dental assistant begins work.

b. Applications for registration as a dental assistant trainee must be filed on official board forms and include the following:

- (1) The fee as specified in 650—Chapter 15.
- (2) Evidence of high school graduation.
- (3) Evidence the applicant is 18 years of age or older.
- (4) Any additional information required by the board relating to the character and experience of the applicant as may be necessary to evaluate the applicant's qualifications.

c. Within 60 days of employment, the dental assistant trainee is required to successfully complete a board-approved course of study and examination in the areas of infection control, hazardous materials and jurisprudence. The course of study may be taken at a board-approved postsecondary school or on the job using curriculum approved by the board for such purpose. Evidence of meeting this requirement shall be submitted within 60 days by the employer dentist.

**20.6(2) Registered dental assistant.**

a. To meet this qualification, a person must:

- (1) Work in a dental office for six months as a dental assistant trainee; or
- (2) Have had at least six consecutive months of prior dental assisting experience under a licensed dentist within the past two years; or
- (3) Be a graduate of a postsecondary dental assisting program.

b. Applications for registration as a registered dental assistant must be filed on official board forms and include the following:

- (1) The fee as specified in 650—Chapter 15.
- (2) Evidence of meeting one of the requirements specified in 20.6(2)“a.”
- (3) Evidence of successful completion of a course of study approved by the board and sponsored by a board-approved postsecondary school in the areas of infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence. The course of study may be taken at a board-approved postsecondary school or on the job using curriculum approved by the board for such purpose.
- (4) Evidence of successful completion of a board-approved examination in the areas of infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence.
- (5) Evidence of meeting the qualifications of 650—Chapter 22 if engaging in dental radiography.
- (6) Evidence of current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation sponsored by a nationally recognized provider.
- (7) Any additional information required by the board relating to the character, education and experience of the applicant as may be necessary to evaluate the applicant's qualifications.

**20.6(3) Expanded function dental assistant.**

a. To meet the qualifications of expanded function dental assistant, applicants must:

- (1) Have two years of experience as a registered dental assistant; or
- (2) Be a current certified dental assistant as defined by the Dental Assisting National Board with six months of dental assisting experience; and
- (3) Have successfully completed a formal program in one or more expanded functions within the previous two years of application as an expanded function dental assistant or documentation of equivalent out-of-state registration or education.

b. Beginning July 1, 2002, applications for registration as an expanded function dental assistant must be filed on official board forms and include the following:

- (1) The fee as specified in 650—Chapter 15.
- (2) Evidence of meeting the qualifications specified in 20.6(3) “a.”
- (3) Evidence of successful completion of a course of study approved by the board and sponsored by a board-approved postsecondary school in the areas of infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence. The course of study may be taken at a board-approved postsecondary school or on the job using curriculum approved by the board for such purpose.
- (4) Evidence of successful completion of a board-approved examination in the areas of infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence.
- (5) Evidence of meeting the qualifications of 650—Chapter 22 if engaging in dental radiography.
- (6) Evidence of current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation sponsored by a nationally recognized provider.
- (7) Evidence of successful completion of a formal program in one or more expanded functions sponsored by a school accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association or a program approved by the board.
- (8) Any additional information required by the board relating to the character, education and experience of the applicant as may be necessary to evaluate the applicant’s qualifications.

c. An expanded function dental assistant is limited to performing only those expanded duties that are delegated by and under the supervision of a licensed dentist and for which the assistant has been trained within the limits of these rules.

**20.6(4)** All applications must be signed and verified by the applicant as to the truth of the documents and statements contained therein.

**650—20.7(153,78GA,ch1002) Registration denial.** The board may deny an application for registration as a dental assistant for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to meet the requirements for registration as specified in these rules.
2. Pursuant to Iowa Code section 147.4, upon any of the grounds for which registration may be revoked or suspended as specified in 650—Chapter 30.

**650—20.8(147,153,78GA,ch1002) Registration denied—appeal procedure.** An applicant who has been denied registration by the board may appeal the denial and request a hearing on the issues related to the registration denial by serving a notice of the appeal and request for hearing upon the executive director not more than 30 days following the date of the mailing of the notification of registration denial to the applicant or not more than 30 days following the date upon which the applicant was served notice if notification was made in the manner of service of an original notice. The hearing and subsequent procedures shall be considered a contested case hearing and shall be governed by the procedures outlined in 650—Chapter 51.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 147.3, 147.4 and 147.29.

**650—20.9(153,78GA,ch1002) Examination requirements.** Beginning July 2, 2001, applicants for registration must successfully pass an examination approved by the board on infection control, hazardous waste, and jurisprudence.

**20.9(1)** Examinations approved by the board are those administered by the board or board’s approved testing centers or the Dental Assisting National Board Infection Control Examination, if taken after June 1, 1991, in conjunction with the board-approved jurisprudence examination.

**20.9(2)** Information on taking the examination may be obtained by contacting the board office at 400 S.W. 8th Street, Suite D, Des Moines, Iowa 50309-4687.

**20.9(3)** An examinee must meet such other requirements as may be imposed by the board's approved dental assistant testing centers.

**20.9(4)** A dental assistant trainee must successfully pass the examination within 60 days of the first date of employment. A dental assistant trainee who does not successfully pass the examination within 60 days shall be prohibited from working in a dental office or clinic until the examination has been passed in accordance with these rules.

**20.9(5)** A score of 75 or better on the board infection control/hazardous material exam and a score of 75 or better on the board jurisprudence exam shall be considered successful completion of the examination. The board accepts the passing standard established by the Dental Assisting National Board for applicants who take the Dental Assisting National Board Infection Control Examination.

**650—20.10(153,78GA,ch1002) System of retaking dental assistant examinations.**

**20.10(1)** *Second examination.*

*a.* On the second examination attempt, a dental assistant shall be required to obtain a score of 75 percent or better on each section of the examination.

*b.* A dental assistant who fails the second examination will be required to complete the remedial education requirements set forth in subrule 20.10(2).

**20.10(2)** *Third and subsequent examinations.*

*a.* Prior to the third examination attempt, a dental assistant must submit proof of additional formal education in the area of the examination failure in a program approved by the board or sponsored by a school accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association.

*b.* A dental assistant who fails the examination on the third attempt may not practice as a dental assistant in a dental office or clinic until additional remedial education approved by the board has been obtained.

*c.* For the purposes of additional study prior to retakes, the fourth or subsequent examination failure shall be considered the same as the third.

**650—20.11(153,78GA,ch1002) Renewal of registration.** A certificate of registration as a registered dental assistant or expanded function dental assistant must be renewed biennially.

**20.11(1)** The board will notify each registrant by mail of the expiration of the registration.

**20.11(2)** Application for renewal must be made in writing to the board at least 30 days before the current registration expires.

**20.11(3)** The appropriate fee as specified in 650—Chapter 15 shall accompany the application for renewal. A penalty shall be assessed by the board for late renewal.

**20.11(4)** Failure to renew the registration by June 30 shall result in assessment of a late fee of \$20 in addition to the renewal fee. Failure to renew by July 30 shall result in assessment of a late fee of \$40. Failure to renew by August 30 following expiration shall result in assessment of a late fee of \$60. Failure to renew a registration prior to September 30 following expiration shall cause the registration to lapse and become invalid. A registrant whose registration has lapsed and become invalid is prohibited from practicing as a dental assistant until the registration is reinstated in accordance with 650—14.5(153).

**20.11(5)** Completion of continuing education is required for renewal of an active registration. Failure to comply will automatically result in a lapsed registration.

**20.11(6)** In order to renew a registration, the registrant shall be required to furnish evidence of valid certification in a nationally recognized course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

**20.11(7)** The board may refuse to renew a registration in accordance with 650—14.3(153).

**650—20.12(153,78GA,ch1002) Continuing education.** Beginning July 1, 2001, each person registered as a dental assistant shall complete 20 hours of continuing education approved by the board during the biennium period as a condition of registration renewal.

**20.12(1)** At least two continuing education hours must be in the subject area of infection control.

**20.12(2)** A maximum of three hours may be in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

**20.12(3)** For dental assistants who have a special endorsement in radiography, at least two hours of continuing education must be obtained in the subject area of radiography.

**20.12(4)** For the renewal period July 1, 2001, to June 30, 2003, at least one hour of continuing education must be obtained in the subject area of jurisprudence.

**650—20.13(252J,261) Receipt of certificate of noncompliance.** The board shall consider the receipt of a certificate of noncompliance from the college student aid commission pursuant to Iowa Code sections 261.121 to 261.127 and 650—Chapter 34 or receipt of a certificate of noncompliance of a support order from the child support recovery unit pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 252J and 650—Chapter 33. Registration denial or denial of renewal of registration shall follow the procedures in the statutes and board rules as set forth in this rule.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 252J and sections 261.121 to 261.127.

**650—20.14(153) Unlawful practice.** A dental assistant who assists a dentist in practicing dentistry in any capacity other than as a person supervised by a dentist in a dental office, or who directly or indirectly procures a licensed dentist to act as nominal owner, proprietor or director of a dental office as a guise or subterfuge to enable such dental assistant to engage directly or indirectly in the practice of dentistry, or who performs dental service directly or indirectly on or for members of the public other than as a person working for a dentist shall be deemed to be practicing dentistry without a license.

**650—20.15(153) Advertising and soliciting of dental services prohibited.** Dental assistants shall not advertise, solicit, represent or hold themselves out in any manner to the general public that they will furnish, construct, repair or alter prosthetic, orthodontic or other appliances, with or without consideration, to be used as substitutes for or as part of natural teeth or associated structures or for the correction of malocclusions or deformities, or that they will perform any other dental service.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 153 and 2000 Iowa Acts, chapter 1002.

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